

When I was young, my family and I lived in a snug one-bedroom apartment. To accommodate our sleeping needs, my parents transformed the dining room into their bedroom, leaving the bedroom for my sister and me. This arrangement led to our family meals and gatherings in the kitchen. The centerpiece of our kitchen was a table with a Formica tabletop trimmed in rippled chrome. The table was paired with coordinating chrome-plated chairs that had padded seats. Today, these tables are referred to as retro dinette sets and can be expensive; however, the memories made around that table are priceless.

After finishing our meals, my sister and I would clear the table. Then we would place the dirty dishes in the sink and run water over them in preparation for washing later. We would then return to the table to continue our family conversations. Unlike today, there was no TV or phone in the kitchen—just us. From the oldest to the youngest, we enjoyed this undisturbed time together as we all participated in our household discussions.

I discovered that the table holds significant symbolic meaning throughout the Bible. It represents fellowship, community, and family. Sharing a meal is a common way to fellowship.

It is not just the physical food but, even more so, the camaraderie of sharing hopes and dreams, discussing concerns and issues, enjoying laughter and celebrations, and receiving or giving words of encouragement. Long after a meal is devoured, the continuing face-to-face chat represents the meal's dessert, enjoying the sweet conversation.

Whether we gather around a table, a fire pit, or on blankets at a picnic, let us treasure these memories and appreciate our closeness with family and friends.

Despite being made to eat my vegetables, I will always cherish the precious memories shared around the kitchen table.

Dear Father, thank You for creating us to fellowship with You and each other.



